



Ministry of
Colleges and
Universities

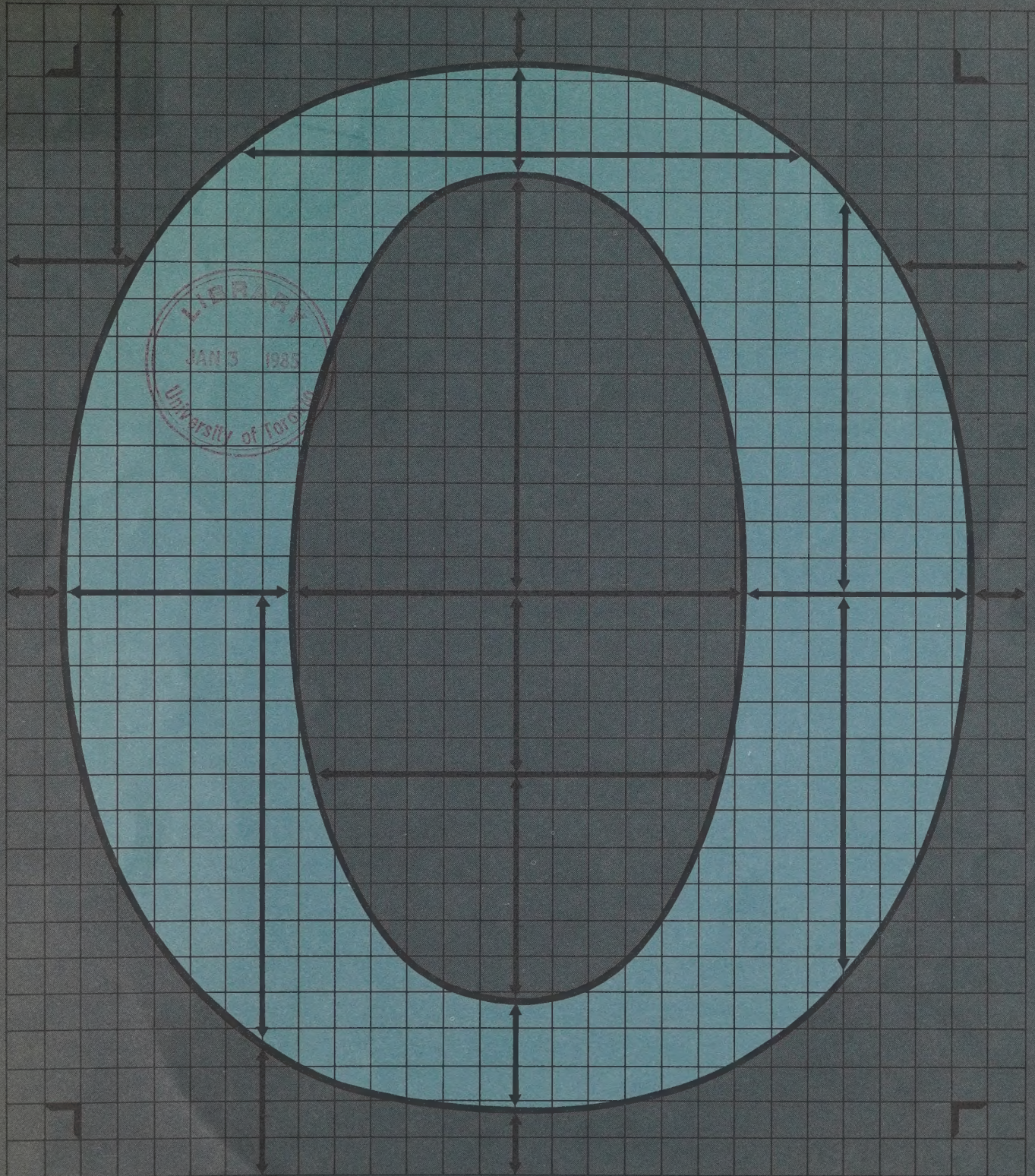


Hon. Bette Stephenson, M.D., Minister
Harry K. Fisher, Deputy Minister

Larry Grossman, Treasurer

CA20N
DG 1
-84C11

ONTARIO CAREER ACTION PROGRAM



Training in Ontario

If you are between the ages of 16 and 24 and can't get a job because you don't have experience and can't get experience because you don't have a job . . .

If you are between the ages of 16 and 24 and can't get a job because you don't have experience and can't get experience because you don't have a job . . .

or

If you are an employer willing to train and hire a young, eager person but can't meet the initial training costs . . .

the Government of Ontario has a program just for you!

The Ontario Career Action Program

Many young people experience frustration in looking for their first job after leaving the educational system. Lack of work experience makes it difficult to find regular jobs that relate to their career goals and education. Yet the only way they can get that experience is by obtaining employment! The Ontario Career Action Program (OCAP) was created to help young people overcome this "first-job dilemma".

OCAP provides young people with on-the-job training so that they may compete more effectively in the labour market. Approximately two-thirds of OCAP trainees are successful in obtaining jobs at the end of their training. They either remain with the training employer or find jobs with other employers to whom they are encouraged to apply during training. OCAP narrows the gap between the educational system and the world of work – both for the trainees and the trainers.

Eligibility Criteria

Trainees

OCAP is not restricted to secondary school, college, or university graduates. In fact, many trainees have not completed secondary school. You are eligible to become an OCAP trainee if you:

- are between the ages of 16 and 24;
- have been out of the educational system (including retraining programs) for at least three months (excluding evening and part-time classes);
- are unemployed or actively looking for your first full-time career-related job;
- have never held a full-time job related to your chosen line of work;
- are resident in Ontario;
- are legally entitled to work in Canada;
- have not previously participated in OCAP.

Trainers

All Ontario businesses, industries, provincial government ministries, colleges, universities, Crown corporations, and municipal and federal government agencies are eligible to participate. They must ensure:

- that the training position is designed to provide valuable work experience and job training;
- that no regular full- or part-time employees are displaced in any way by the introduction of an OCAP trainee;
- that the hours of work constitute a full-time work week (usually 35-40 hours per week);
- that regular and direct supervision is provided for the trainee throughout the training period;

- that there is a good possibility that the trainee may be employed by the training employer after the training period;
- or
- that the skills acquired in training are marketable in the community so that the trainee's job prospects with other local businesses are good.

Financial Support While Training

Trainees are not employees of the training company while they are participating in OCAP. Therefore, training employers pay no wages to trainees.

OCAP is not a wage subsidy program. Rather it provides allowances for OCAP participants to assist them with their expenses while they are training. A training allowance of \$100.00 per week is paid directly to the trainees, usually every two weeks.

In addition, Unemployment Insurance premiums and Canada Pension Plan contributions are paid on behalf of the trainees. Trainees are, however, expected to make their own arrangements for OHIP coverage (most trainees are eligible for OHIP premium assistance).

Duration of Training

The length of the training period is determined by the complexity of the job and the individual needs of the trainee. For most trainees, in most occupations, twelve weeks of training are allowed. *The maximum duration of OCAP is eighty training days.* This maximum length cannot be extended under any circumstances, not even when illness or some other unforeseen circumstance disrupts the training.

Organization and Structure

The Role of the OCAP Co-ordinator

OCAP is administered through OCAP offices located in the colleges of applied arts and technology. An OCAP co-ordinator acts as a liaison officer for the participants.

The co-ordinators:

- encourage employers to participate in OCAP;
- select appropriate training employers to meet the needs of trainee applicants;
- help to design training plans for individual trainees;
- determine the length of training for individual training positions;
- supervise the final selection of candidates;
- monitor the training being offered by participating organizations;
- provide information, guidance, and workshops on career clarification and job-search techniques;
- provide advice and support for trainees when they encounter problems.

In all cases, it is the prerogative of the college to assign trainees to employers for training under OCAP. The OCAP co-ordinator may request changes in the training program and/or reassign trainees at his/her discretion.

Any changes in the circumstances of the trainee or trainer which have a bearing on the training plan should be brought to the attention of the OCAP co-ordinator without delay. Any change in the training plan must be made in consultation with the co-ordinator.

OCAP is a program of the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities which operates through the Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology.

If you are an employer willing to train and hire a young, eager person but can't meet the initial training costs . . .

Your Role as a Trainee

OCAP helps you get the experience you need in order to obtain your first permanent job. The value of that experience depends to a large extent on the effort you put into your training and on the direction you receive from your trainer and OCAP co-ordinator. To get the most out of OCAP, therefore, you should:

- use this on-the-job training to improve your job skills and work habits;
- take the OCAP experience as seriously as you would a permanent job;
- attend the job-search sessions provided for you by the college;
- go over your training plan with your trainer on a regular basis;
- discuss your trainer's appraisal of your work with him/her each month;
- consult the OCAP co-ordinator if any problems or questions arise concerning your training position.

Your Role as a Trainer

If your company or business is selected as an OCAP trainer, you will be required to provide a practical training experience for a young person. In most cases, OCAP trainees have had no previous significant work experience. It is, therefore, essential to provide intensive training and supervision, especially during the first few weeks. As a trainer, you will be required to:

- develop the training plan, with the assistance of the OCAP co-ordinator;
- participate in the final selection of the trainee;
- enhance the trainee's work performance by providing him/her with instruction as well as an appropriate learning environment;
- appraise the work performance of the trainee and discuss it regularly with him/her;
- approve the trainee's attendance reports and send them to the college at the required time;
- assist the trainee, where possible, with his/her job search by providing advice, encouragement, and information regarding job prospects;
- provide all the equipment, supplies, materials, etc., required for the training;
- provide a safe working environment, reinforced by instruction in safe working practices, and adhere to all the terms of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Application to OCAP

Trainees

Application forms are available from your local college of applied arts and technology. When you call, ask for the OCAP office.

You will be required to provide information about yourself to assist the co-ordinator in matching your career goals and qualifications to available training positions. If you are unsure of your career goals, counselling (both individual and group) is available to assist you in determining your goals. It is important that you give considerable thought to your career goals as OCAP is a one-time only opportunity. You should never accept a position simply because it is the only one available at the time. You should consider very carefully the career possibilities that will result from a training position.

If a suitable position is not immediately available, you are encouraged to continue searching for one. OCAP offers a job-search workshop which can help you find a position that matches your career goals. By working together with OCAP you will locate a position that will lead you towards a permanent career.

Trainers

An Employer Application and Training Plan form is available from your local college of applied arts and technology.

You will be required to provide detailed information about your company and the training position available. Not all applications for the placement of a trainee are approved. Trainers are selected on the basis of their ability to provide opportunities for skill development and potential for employment.

The Design of a Training Plan

The purpose of this plan is to identify the training position offered, to state the objectives to be achieved, and to outline the tasks to be undertaken by the trainee. It is essential that the type of work experience gained by OCAP trainees be relevant to current labour market needs and that the skills acquired be useful to employers without extensive further training.

As the length of the OCAP training period is limited, it is essential that trainees be given the type of work experience that will allow them to enter the work force without undue delay.

The training objectives represent an important element of the training plan. The objectives should relate directly to what the trainee should be able to do at the end of the training period. The trainee can then use the objectives as a guide to, as well as a measure of, progress.

The objectives must be discussed with the trainee at the very beginning of the training period. In order to keep the trainee interested in and satisfied with his/her learning experience, the objectives should be neither too difficult nor too easy to attain. They should also be flexible enough to accommodate the particular abilities of the trainee.

The work experience gained by the trainee should be related to the objectives stated in the training plan. Ideally, the tasks should progress from a "beginner's level" to an "expected level of competence". The training plan may, however, be adjusted to suit the potential of the trainee. Any significant changes should be made in consultation with the OCAP co-ordinator and the trainee.

Your OCAP training period is a one-time only opportunity. Make the most of it!

Selection of Candidates

The preliminary selection of candidates is carried out by the OCAP co-ordinator. The trainer should be involved in the final selection of the trainee as he/she is in the best position to determine the candidate's suitability for the training position, with reference both to the assignments to be undertaken and the organization's working environment.

If a trainer already has someone in mind to fill the position, he/she may refer that person to the OCAP co-ordinator. In most cases, however, a trainer will not be permitted to select a member of his/her immediate family as a trainee. OCAP is designed to provide work experience outside the family environment.

The selection interviews offer the trainers an excellent opportunity to give the candidates a beneficial learning experience. They should make a point of using the last minutes of the interview to review each applicant's presentation with him/her and to give constructive advice.

Unsuccessful candidates should be given a reasonable explanation. Such feedback will prove useful in their subsequent job search.

Start of Training

A trainee may not begin an OCAP training position until authorized to do so by the OCAP co-ordinator. An agreement between the college, the trainer, and the trainee is signed by all parties. This agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities of each party. At that time, the trainee and the trainer are also informed about attendance regulations and reports, payment of allowances, and performance appraisal.

Attendance Regulations and Payment of Allowances

Trainees should remember that they may not receive their first allowance cheque until two to four weeks after commencing the program. The OCAP co-ordinator can provide specific information.

The training allowance is affected by attendance; \$20.00 is deducted for each day that a trainee is absent. For calculation purposes, attendance is rounded to the nearest half day.

The trainee is marked "present" while attending career-guidance or job-search sessions offered by the college.

If the trainer has not made a firm commitment to hire the trainee after the training period, the trainee should be encouraged to pursue an active job search during working hours. In view of the trainee's lack of experience in this area, the trainer should offer his/her support and monitor these activities.

For attendance purposes, the trainee is considered "present" while engaged in job-search activities. The procedures to be followed in this regard must be established by the trainee, the trainer, and the OCAP co-ordinator.

Performance Appraisal

Performance is made up of three elements: *work habits*, *attitudes*, and *job skills*. *Work habits* include general behaviour and deportment; *attitudes* include the level of interest and enthusiasm towards the work, and the relationships developed with co-workers and the trainer. *Job skills* encompass the particular abilities and knowledge required to do the specific job. Involvement in a real job situation is one of the most effective ways of improving an individual's job skills, work habits, and potential for productivity.

Every four weeks, the trainee and the trainer should meet to discuss the trainee's performance and assess his/her progress. Performance appraisal is an integral part of the OCAP learning experience; it is meant to be a co-operative process during which the trainer and the trainee go over the objectives stated in the training plan and identify areas needing improvement. The aim of the discussion is to encourage the trainee to improve his/her work. Performance improvement is not accidental; it is the result of deliberate effort stemming from increased motivation. In addition to evaluating job performance, the appraisal discussion should clarify duties, responsibilities, and expectations and assess employability. It offers an opportunity to revise both short- and long-term goals.

Trainees!

Remember that once you have been a trainee with OCAP, you cannot apply for another training position under the program. Your OCAP training period is a *one-time only opportunity*. Make the most of it!